

As the population of the armed forces has changed, so too have the services offered by the USO. Today, this great organization provides childcare services for kids whose parents are deployed, travel assistance for the family of wounded service members, prepaid phone cards, the ever-popular celebrity tours, and countless other services for our troops and their families.

Recently, my staff and the staff of Senator KENNEDY had very close contact with the personnel and services of the USO through its New England offices in Boston. Several weeks ago, our staff was contacted by the family of an American soldier who had become gravely ill in Iraq. She had been evacuated to the American hospital at Landstuhl, Germany, where doctors determined she was near death. She was so ill that her doctors ordered her medically retired, making her daughter eligible for retirement benefits. But that reclassification also meant that the Army could no longer pay for her family's travel to Germany to be at her bedside. That decision, made for all the right reasons, had the unintentional and regrettable consequence of bringing only more grief to a family already grappling with the prospect of losing their loved one.

And that is when USO-New England and its director, Alice Harkins, got involved. When the situation was explained to her, Alice replied simply, "We're going to do this. This is why we exist." And, as promised, the USO-New England found the money and paid for the soldier's family to travel to Germany.

Alice Harkins and her capable staff at USO-New England represent the best of us. Through their vigorous efforts, their determination, and their simple desire to help those who serve in our military, they inspire us all. They are people who recognize what's right, and who show their love of country and their love for those who serve with deeds as well as words.

The USO receives no financial support from the U.S. Government. Its success is due to the countless volunteers who contribute time and energy for the men and women of the Armed Forces in times of war and peace and the generosity of sponsors who make its operation possible.

I know I express the sentiment of the Senate and current and former members of the Armed Forces when I say thank you, USO, for your efforts to bring a slice of home to those on the frontlines and for remembering their families while they are away. We should all aspire to make such a contribution. Fortunately, the people of the USO, people like Alice Harkins, do. And we can all be grateful. ●

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. On May 1, 2003, Senator KENNEDY

and I introduced the Local Law Enforcement Act, a bill that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred in Germantown, MD. A 16-year-old Arab-American girl was physically attacked by a group of unknown young adults on the Campus of Montgomery College on September 14, 2001. This was the first of three hate crimes targeting the student and her family. On September 21, her family was out driving when unknown assailants threw a firecracker in front of their car. On September 28, vandals smashed the rear window of the family's minivan while it was parked in front of their home.

I believe that government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

RALLY AGAINST HATE

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I wish to acknowledge the efforts of my colleagues and many others participating in the Rally Against Hate on Capitol Hill today.

The rally has been organized by Senators EDWARD KENNEDY and GORDON SMITH, along with the Human Rights Campaign and its coalition partners, to show support and build momentum for passage of Federal hate crimes legislation, "The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act."

Also participating in the rally today is a very brave and amazing constituent of mine, Trev Broudy. Trev is a handsome 34-year old actor from West Hollywood, CA, and he is also the victim of a hate crime motivated by his sexual orientation.

On September 1, 2003, Trev was hugging and saying goodbye to his friend, Teddy Ulett, on the street in West Hollywood when two men jumped out of a car without warning and began swinging at Trev's head with a baseball bat and an iron pipe.

After the attack, Trev was rushed to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center where doctors cleaned away pieces of skull from the back of his head and pieced together other parts of skull that had been crushed. He was then placed in an induced coma for over a week to guard against swelling of his brain.

Today, Trev looks and sounds fine, although he will never fully recover from the attack. He has said, "People assume because I look all right and I'm healthy and I'm walking and I'm talking, I'm all better, but I'm not."

When Trev finally left the hospital—10 weeks after the attack—he thought his injuries would eventually heal and he would soon return to work. How-

ever, Trev belatedly learned that a major part of his brain had to be removed, leaving him with only half the vision in both of his eyes.

Once having a good career as a voice-over artist, Trev now struggles with the results of his injuries every day and finds it difficult to read even the simplest sentence. He has returned home to his old apartment, but he will never be able to return to his old life.

Yet Trev is an inspiration and a hero to his family and friends back home, and particularly to other gay men and lesbians who see this heinous crime as a personal attack on their community.

Los Angeles' gay and lesbian community even came together and protested the county district attorney's decision not to file hate crime charges against the men suspected of beating Trev. Although the West Hollywood sheriff's station, which investigated the case, initially filed State hate crime charges, the district attorney's office chose not to file hate crimes enhancements in the case.

And, unfortunately, the limitations of current Federal hate crimes law prevent it from helping Trev because it does not extend basic civil rights protections to every American—only to a few and under certain circumstances.

Congress should expand the ability of the Federal Government to investigate hate crimes, and it should expand the ability to prosecute anyone who would target victims because of hate.

We can, and must, do more to prevent these types of hateful threats and acts of violence, and passing The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act would do just that.

The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act would: expand current Federal protections against hate crimes based on race, religion, and national origin; amend the criminal code to cover hate crimes based on gender, sexual orientation, and disability; authorize grants for State and local programs designed to combat and prevent hate crimes; and enable the Federal Government to assist State and local law enforcement in investigating and prosecuting hate crimes.

Enacting the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is long overdue. It is necessary for the safety and well-being of millions of Americans. Until it is enacted, many hate crime victims and their families may not receive the justice they deserve.

Efforts to enact this legislation have received strong bipartisan support in the past, and the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act now has 48 cosponsors in the Senate. We just have not been able to get it to the President's desk for consideration.

Today, I ask all of my colleagues to rally against hate by working to ensure that this legislation is not simply supported but actually passed and signed into law. Let us send a message to all Americans that we will no longer turn a blind eye to hate crimes in this country.